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Congress of the United States
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June 19, 2020

Admiral Brett P. Giroir, M.D.
Assistant Secretary for Health
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Admiral Giroir,

Thank you for taking time to talk with me yesterday. As we discussed, I strongly urge you, as our nation's Testing Czar, to develop and execute a plan for the United States to adopt pooled sampling, the latest innovation in COVID-19 testing. As you know, pooled sampling is when large numbers of test samples – anywhere from 2 to 20 specimens at once – are pooled together and then screened at once. If you get a positive result from a pool, you then test each person in the sample. As we continue to see the number of positive cases hover at just 1-6% of those tested, pooled sampling can make a huge impact to help us identify those infected and isolate them while getting our economy back in track. As you know, positive test results continue to decrease, so this will become even more helpful. For example, on Tuesday, June 16th, New York reached the lowest percentage of positive COVID-19 tests since the pandemic began. Out of the 59,341 tests conducted in New York State that day, only 567, or less than one percent, were positive.

Experts note that these tests can be very accurate and efficient. As former Food and Drug Administrator Scott Gottlieb recently noted, pooled sampling is how China claims it recently managed to screen 10 million citizens in Wuhan in 19 days. As the *New York Times* recently reported, this has led to a huge surge in Wuhan's testing capacity: "Laboratories went from processing around 46,000 tests a day, on average, before the drive, to as many as 1.47 million tests on Friday. By comparison, the state of New York has tested 1.7 million people since March 4."

And as we discussed, I'm glad you agree that pooled sampling can be a game changer to get large numbers of people tested quickly – including for nursing homes, hospitals, businesses, and public housing among many others. For businesses of all sizes, this can help them reopen and stay open knowing they can test workers in large numbers and on a regular basis if needed. I look forward to working with you to bring pooled sampling into widespread use. Thank you and I appreciate your prompt response to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'max', followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Max Rose
Member of Congress